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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

22 May 1961

RELEASE IN FULL 1992

Civil Defense and Air Raid Shelters in the USSR

1. The Soviet Union has developed a substantial civil defense program.
2. According to one estimate, the USSR is currently spending between \$500,000,000 and \$1,500,000,000 per year on civil defense. [A large part of this would represent shelter construction.]
3. Air raid shelters, offering varying degrees of protection, are being built everywhere in the USSR under a program started ten years ago.
4. In Soviet cities, the most widespread type of shelter is that which is located in the basements of masonry buildings -- factories, public offices, and apartment houses.
5. It has been reported that all new Soviet buildings must contain air raid shelters.
6. Soviets have ruled out the use of basements which are not specially prepared for civil defense use.
7. According to official Soviet publications, fully prepared basement air raid shelters must be heat resistant, able to withstand the complete collapse of the building above, must be filter-ventilated, and gas-tight, and supplied with first-aid and emergency equipment. Soviet citizens are told they may have to remain in the shelters for many days.
8. The use of Soviet shelters for storage purposes has been permitted in the past. However, a 1959 civil defense manual contained the statement, "All shelters must be maintained in constant readiness for use [even] in time of peace."
9. Additional shelters are provided in the form of subways and detached public shelters built in open areas.

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10. According to Soviet literature, "special" shelters have water, sewage disposal, a filter-ventilating system and "other equipment."

11. Soviet leaders and civil defense literature have indicated that the deep-level subways in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev are intended for use as air raid shelters. The Moscow subway alone should have a capacity for as many as 2,000,000 persons in the lower levels.

12. An incomplete subway is located in the city of Tbilisi, and additional tunnel systems are known to exist under Stalingrad, Sevastopol, Odessa, and Kerch.

13. Continuity of government is undoubtedly provided for. In addition to shelters remaining in Moscow from World War II, new large shelters for the Soviet leadership have been built outside Moscow and a large automated command post, 120 feet underground, has been reported 450 miles east of the city.

14. Civil defense training courses now being given to the Soviet public require that a part of the instruction be given in an equipped air raid shelter. Citizens are also taught how to build large, field-type, wood-lined, trench shelters covered with two feet of earth. [Upon order of the Soviet government, these would be built in locations not having enough formal shelter for the inhabitants.]

15. Since 1954, the USSR civil defense program has been accelerated. Forty-four hours training for the entire population has been attempted and more is scheduled. Soviet marshals have called attention to the vulnerability of cities and industry to "mass destruction" weapons -- chemical, bacteriological, and atomic. They have publicly urged reorganized civil defense efforts. Since 1955, Soviet civil defense publications have introduced detached underground shelters, with blast traps and dust filters in shelter ventilating systems. The latter are for protection against high pressure and radioactive fallout. Long escape tunnels from shelters under buildings were designed to prevent entrapment caused by building collapse.



16. The Soviets have maintained an interest in air raid shelter construction since 1950. A Soviet publication of 1952 noted these were built in accordance with a "special plan" for protecting the population.

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